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The Increasing Isolation of the Catholic Church

RECENT developments in the Catholic Church must be disturbing to all non-Roman Christians, even if we have not, as some Anglo-Catholics, cherished the hope of a possible ultimate reunion with Rome. For these developments increase the isolation of the Roman Church from the rest of Christendom. They widen the moat of pretension and heighten the wall of contradictory dogma which separates Rome from other Christians.

The first shock came with the Vatican announcement that the Pope would, on Nov. 1st, declare the assumption of the Virgin Mary to be a dogma of the church, which all members of the church are bound to believe. Thus the Pope invokes for the first time the doctrine of Papal infallibility which was established in 1870; and at the same time he incorporates a legend of the Middle Ages into the official teachings of the church, thereby placing the final capstone on the Mariolatry of the Roman Church.

In some respects the Papal encyclical of August 21st is even more disturbing. This is a very carefully worded document which will have as fateful an influence upon the thought of the church as the encyclical on modernism in the last century. In fact it brings theological tendencies, first expressed in that encyclical, to their logical conclusion. But it is not modernism which is prescribed in the encyclical. The theological tendencies against which the Pope warns are thoroughly orthodox from the Biblical standpoint. They are questionable only from a strict Thomistic standpoint. The Pope's warnings are obviously intended against theological movements in England, France and Germany which have won the respect of Christian thought beyond the confines of the Roman Church.

The strict Thomism of the encyclical is directed against both Protestant thought and against tendencies in modern philosophy. The Pope warns against the "eirenism" in some sections of the church which seeks to "reconcile differences in dogma" between Roman and non-Roman churches. More specifically this means that Augustinian, as distinguished from Thomistic forms of thought, frequently lead to conceptions of the relation of faith to reason, in which Protestants and Catholics are able to agree. In refu-

tation of this position the encyclical frequently re-asserts the Thomistic position which makes faith not so much the presupposition of reason as the correction of reason which has "been hampered both by the activity of the senses and the imagination and by evil passions arising from original sin." "Absolutely speaking," the encyclical asserts, "reason can, by its own natural force and light, arrive at the true and certain knowledge of the one personal God."

The Thomistic position is also asserted against tendencies in modern Catholic thought to regard various philosophies as compatible with the Christian faith, a thesis eloquently defended recently in the current issue of an English Catholic journal. The Pope criticizes those who think "that our perennial philosophy is only a philosophy of immutable essences while the contemporary mind must look to the existence of things and life which is ever in flux." This section of the encyclical seems almost specifically directed at the thought of Christian existentialists such as Gabriel Marcel.

From reasons which are not quite clear in the encyclical, the Pope also warns against the preoccupation of some Catholic theologians with early Christian thought. "What is expounded in the encyclical letters of the Roman Pontiffs is habitually neglected by some with the idea of giving force to some notions (*sic*) which they profess to have found in the ancient fathers especially the Greeks." This portion of the encyclical would seem to have serious consequences on some very significant patristic studies, particularly in France.

In addition fruitful Biblical studies are restricted because some of the Catholic Biblical scholars have evidently traced (as all good Biblical scholars do) the relation of Biblical to non-Biblical historical material. The Pope asserts that the Genesis chapters on creation, etc., must be accepted as simple history and nothing must be taught which might imply that our "ancient sacred writers" are not superior to "the ancient profane writers."

In every section of the encyclical the kind of freedom which true scholarship requires, is restricted in the interest of a strict Thomism. One has no right to speculate from the outside just what sort of forces

inside the church move toward the production of such a document. But one rather suspects that the practical hierarchs who want everything in neat and exact form, have expressed themselves in this encyclical against some of the most creative theologians in the Roman Church.

Perhaps the most serious aspect of the encyclical is not so much in the particular restrictions which it places upon thought, as its insistence that all encyclical utterances are generally binding.

"If the Supreme Pontiffs," declares the Pope,

"in their official documents purposely pass judgment upon a matter up to that time in dispute, it is obvious that the matter, according to the mind and the will of the same Pontiffs, can no longer be considered a question open to discussion among theologians."

Thus Papal absolutism takes one further step and the ossification of dogma is furthered to one more degree. Non-Roman Christians cannot but view these developments with profound regret, particularly in an age in which so many lights of freedom are snuffed out.—R. N.

The World Council Looks Forward*

W. A. VISSER 't HOOFT

THE year 1950 has special significance for the ecumenical movement. It was forty years ago that the World Missionary Conference met at Edinburgh and twenty-five years ago that the Universal Conference on Life and Work met at Stockholm.

Forty years for the wider ecumenical movement, twenty-five for the ecumenical relationships between church leaders, and three for the World Council—these are exceedingly short periods, and that very especially in church history which moves generally in majestic slow motion. It should furthermore be taken into consideration that the development was interrupted by two world wars and took place in a period of the fiercest international crises and conflicts. A movement which has developed so quickly and under such adverse circumstances represents, surely, a deep spiritual current in the life of the churches. We may go further and say, this rediscovery of the essential oneness of the Church of Christ which has occurred in so many places at one and the same time, and this eager turning of the churches toward each other, is the work of the Lord, who gathers his children together today in a marvelous way.

The ecumenical movement is now an established and, to a large extent, an accepted fact. But does it truly represent the fulfillment of the hopes which lived in the hearts of its pioneers? We must also ask what it has accomplished and whether it has failed in important respects.

Reasons for Thankfulness

Among the many reasons for thankfulness I would single out especially the following:

A. Between the churches within the ecumenical fellowship there has grown up a basic Christian con-

fidence such as did not exist forty or even twenty-five years ago. It is owing to this confidence that churches have remained in relations of fellowship with each other in spite of very strong tensions between the nations or regimes in which they live.

B. The isolated and struggling churches, particularly the churches surrounded by large hostile majorities, have found real and deep spiritual encouragement in the fact that they are part of a worldwide movement which cares for them and shares their burdens.

C. It has been shown that interchurch cooperation is possible and vastly more effective than separate action by the churches. Many churches in the World Council have sought to perform their task of Christian solidarity together and have thus been able to meet the needs of the suffering churches in a far more adequate way than in any previous crisis in church history.

D. There has been a remarkable interpenetration of Christian thought. Christian thinking among both theologians and laymen is increasingly taking place within an ecumenical context. The result is that there is undoubtedly more convergence of theological insight than there has been for a long time.

E. We are now able to speak out together on these vital issues of public life on which there is fundamental agreement between the participating churches. There is increasing appreciation of the fact that this witness is truly representative of a vast body of Christian conviction and must, therefore, be taken seriously.

F. We now have in the World Council of Churches and the International Missionary Council working in close association with each other, an organizational structure for the ecumenical task such as has never existed before.

*The Annual Report of the General Secretary of the World Council of Churches (condensed).

Counter Currents

It would, however, be unrealistic to forget the other side of the picture. Now that the World Council is a factor in ecclesiastical life and now that the ecumenical movement is no longer merely an aspiration but a substantial reality, there appear certain reactions and counter currents. Their common denominator is a certain vague fear that the World Council may prove to possess an inner logic and dynamic which may lead the churches to go further than they want to go. It is today more difficult than it was in the first years after the war to arrive at a truly coordinated plan of inter-church aid. Again, the working out of a common strategy with regard to the missionary and evangelistic outreach of the church meets with very considerable difficulties. There is a slowing up of the approaches toward organic union between churches and a corresponding tendency to accept the present *status quo* with regard to interdenominational and interconfessional relations. But however worthy their motives and however necessary their warnings may be, there is a danger that these counter currents may lead to the arresting of our growth, and to a loss of the momentum which has characterized our movement so far. The ecumenical movement must always have an adventurous, or to put it in Biblical terms, a prophetic character. For it is essentially a common pilgrimage toward that church which an ecumenical pioneer has called, "the coming great Church," and which is to manifest more clearly the oneness of the body of Christ.

The World Council Under Fire

On the whole, we have reason to be encouraged by the very real interest and the sense of expectation which we meet in many quarters. But the World Council is also under fire. During this last year the attacks have been particularly violent. They deal with two aspects of our work: namely, our attitude to politics and our doctrinal position. And in both areas, the attacks come from two opposite directions. Many of these attacks are so obviously inspired by ulterior motives and so utterly lacking in substance that we find it difficult to take them seriously. It would, however, be a mistake to dismiss these wild statements altogether. It is particularly necessary to deny certain accusations against those who have little occasion to express themselves. I refer particularly to one of our presidents: namely, Prof. T. C. Chao of China, who has repeatedly been attacked as a modernist and a theologian who distorts the central Biblical message. I can best deny this untruth by quoting two central phrases from a recent address by Professor Chao: "The basic Christian Gospel is the Good Tidings of man's redemption by Christ, in whose presence as the Word Incarnate man is shaken awake to his own spiritual state

and his own deepest need for deliverance. . . . In Him (Christ), as the Word Incarnate, we may learn that man is reconciled to God; for in Him dwells both deity and humanity in peace." Although it may seem superfluous, I would also use this opportunity to deny flatly as a downright lie that there are any Communists on the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches.

Clarification Needed

The first task to which we have to address ourselves is one of clarifying our goals and explaining them in such a way that there remains no room for misunderstanding on the part of anybody except those who are blinded by prejudice. The two areas in which such clarification is particularly urgent are the ecclesiological area and the political area.

With regard to the first, we must formulate the purpose of the World Council in such a way that a mistaken conception of the World Council being or becoming a superchurch is excluded once for all. At the same time we should show that participation in the World Council implies the acceptance of a different responsibility: namely, to seek seriously and constantly for ways and means by which we may manifest together the essential oneness of the Church of Christ.

Equally difficult is the clear formulation of our attitude with regard to major political and social conflicts of our time. In all political and social situations today there is the powerful temptation to adjust the message of the church to the prevalent political and ideological currents. Now the World Council as a body of the churches and as an ecumenical body must find its way through this chaos of voices and must seek to echo *only* the voice of the Lord of the Church. The churches reserve their right to speak the Word of God to all nations, regimes, and systems. And they desire to remain in close fellowship with each other regardless of the regimes under which they have to live. Among our brothers in the Communist countries there is a great longing to remain in vital contact with their brethren elsewhere. We must use all possible opportunities to show that we desire to remain in fellowship with them.

Qualitative Advance

We have now reached a stage in which, with regard to our membership, our financial resources, and our organizational structure, we have gone as far as we can expect to be allowed to go during the very first stage of our journey. Any further progress must be qualitative rather than quantitative in character.

I should, therefore, like to mention five aspects of this qualitative advance which can and should be undertaken without adding to our present machinery and which seem particularly urgent today.

Putting Inter-Church Solidarity on a Permanent Basis

The period of post-war reconstruction has come to an end and we have entered into a period of long-term tasks of mutual service and assistance to needy fellow-Christians.

There are churches which are fighting a desperate battle for survival. There is the need of the displaced persons, which has already been met to a considerable extent and there is the even greater need of the refugees for whom no one has as yet accepted full responsibility. Nothing has shown more clearly that the ecumenical movement is a reality than the help which churches have rendered to each other, and that to a large extent across denominational lines.

Getting the Membership of the Churches Committed to the Ecumenical Cause

We have still a long way to go before the members of all churches participating in the World Council will know about the existence and work of the Council and a very much longer way before they will all have arrived at a real understanding and true appreciation of its task. Now the main burden of this work of education must be borne by the churches themselves. There are many ways in which local parishes and congregations can be brought to a sense of responsibility in and for the ecumenical movement. Most important of all is to help them to make truly ecumenical intercession a part of their regular worship. *Specific* prayer for the *specific* needs of the other churches in the Council is the most direct way to make church members realize that they are surrounded by the cloud of witnesses.

But the Council itself has also a considerable task in this field. It is to provide the information and publicity which enables the churches to present the ecumenical movement to their members.

The fruits of these different approaches—all of which have begun within the last few years—are already becoming visible, but it will take us many years of concentrated work to reach the goal that in each church there is a strong band of clergymen, laymen, women, and young people who know the life and problems of our movement intimately and who identify themselves fully with its purpose.

Stimulating Searching Conversation Between the Churches

A qualitative advance means for our movement a more intensive and sustained meeting of minds and hearts than we have yet had. For spiritual unity cannot possibly grow in the sterile atmosphere of the principle of live and let live.

Our decision to stay together implies, therefore, that we come to grips with each other, that we enter into a searching conversation with the desire to come

to know each other and be led together more deeply into the truth of God's revelation.

It is sometimes thought that in order to maintain the ecumenical movement it is necessary to avoid the discussion of our fundamental differences. That is a superficial and worldly counsel. The cause of the church is best served where men speak the truth in love and have sufficient confidence in the power of the Lord to keep them together so as to share their truest and deepest convictions with each other.

Rendering Our Common Witness More Effective

But our Council does not merely exist for the sake of the churches. True Christian unity is not introverted; its *raison d'être* is the more adequate proclamation of the word of salvation. The final criterion of our work is whether it results in convincing common witness so that the world, the pagan world of our time, with its artificial enthusiasms and its paralyzing uncertainty, may see more clearly that there is salvation from the ant-heap of the total state and the despair of uncontrolled self-expression.

Such witness cannot be a partial witness which deals merely with the so-called religious province of life. It has been the glory of our movement that since its very beginning it has proclaimed the Lordship of Christ over all realms of life. And in a world of totalitarian systems only such a total witness can be convincing. If we seek to deal with social and political issues we do not do so because we are obsessed by the secular; we do it because it belongs to the very nature of the witness which we are called to render. And in a world in which man's life everywhere is fashioned by social and political conditions, convictions, ideologies—we are, for the sake of God and man, forced to deal with the great secular issues of our time.

Demonstrating the Inter-relatedness of Missions and Ecumenism

The Bangkok Conference has inaugurated a period in which the World Council will be far more directly concerned with the Younger Churches than it has been before.

Now it is natural that the fundamental question of the relation of the missionary and the ecumenical approaches takes on a new urgency. There are voices both in the East and West which suggest that the two approaches are so different in character that they cannot be integrated. If that is true, the outlook for the Younger Churches is dark indeed. For it is quite clear that unless missions continue, and indeed unless there is a renewal of missionary passion, the Christian cause in Asia or Africa has little future. But it is also clear that the Younger Churches desire to take their full place in the ecumenical movement.

Our task then is to prove that missions and ecumenism do not compete with each other and, in

fact, that they presuppose each other. Forty years ago, the consideration of the common missionary task became the beginning of the modern ecumenical movement. And we realize that missions in our day must take place in the context of the ecumenical fellowship such as we have learned to understand that fellowship during the history of the last forty years. We should then convince our church members that in both the missionary and the ecumenical movement we are finally only concerned with one and the same thing; the upbuilding of the Body of Christ and the manifestation of its oneness—in order that the world may believe.

Dr. Bennett in Japan

SAM H. FRANKLIN

JAPAN has had many religious conferences both before and after the war, but there is general agreement that the one-week institute held in June under the leadership of Dr. John C. Bennett, of Union Theological Seminary, New York City, was a unique event. Conservative leaders of the church pronounce it a turning point, a reawakening in the field of Christian social thinking, and see it as opening the door for positive, aggressive social action in a church that has too long been lacking in a prophetic witness. Denounced in a message from the reactionary "American Council of Churches" as a dangerous "red," Bennett actually came with the solemn warning that the combination of Russian Nationalism and Communist ideology has produced the most demonic force the world has known. Himself an American, Bennett boldly urged that the Japanese church take action which would symbolize the severance of its relation to occupation policy. Arriving at a time when the repressive measures against student leftists and others had just begun, he urged that the church become the mouthpiece for legitimate complaints against the occupation, instead of leaving such complaints to the Communist Party. Speaking on the very eve of the outbreak of war in Korea, which was to confront the Japanese people with still graver decisions, he challenged the complacency of Barthian other-worldliness which sees all cats as equally black, and focused attention upon the relevance of the Lordship of Christ to every plane of life and to all the events of history.

Bennett was invited to Japan by the social department of the United Church (the Kyodan) and by the Tokyo Union Theological Seminary. His coming was made possible financially by the Interboard Committee for Christian Work in Japan, and the Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A. His program was arranged in co-operation with the National Christian Council of

Japan. He spoke to large audiences of youth at the former imperial university and elsewhere. For five successive days he lectured on "The Doctrine of the Church," to faculty and students at the Union Seminary. He had a meeting with the "non-church" group, an interview with Gen. MacArthur, and by special invitation spent an hour with a brother of the Emperor discussing the social implications of Christianity.

The institute on Christian social responsibility, however, was unquestionably the history-making event of his visit. It was held at the foot of Mt. Fuji, in a YMCA camp which had been lent for the occasion. At this conference ground, where fifteen years before Japanese thought police had arrested delegates of the Student Christian Movement at their annual meeting, some eighty representatives of the United Church, coming from every district from Hokkaido to Kyushu, assembled. A large majority were ministers, the remainder theological seminary teachers, representatives of the YMCA and the YWCA, and a few specially selected seminary students. Among the ministers and professors were intellectual leaders of the church, especially the theologians of the influential Presbyterian-Reformed "Nikki" group.

To understand the significance of the results of this conference it is necessary to glance at the background of the United Church itself. The story of the repressive measures taken to line the church up with the nationalist policy before and during the war, and of the persecution and imprisonment with which they were enforced, is already well known. During this period the dominant element among the intellectual leaders of the church fed upon Barthian theology, especially that of the pre-1932 Barth, not the Barth of the Barmen confession and the defiance of Nazi tyranny. This stress upon transcendence and discontinuity carried over to the post-war period, and created a tendency to answer social injustice in terms of pure eschatology. Moreover the emphasis upon an evangelism that ignored the social context of man's sin, and the general rush to rebuild and to get ecclesiastical and mission machinery functioning again, left social ethics in a secondary place. Over-simplified statements of the opportunity in Japan, made in America, strengthened this tendency. A missionary movement, moreover, which came to a somewhat too easy peace with the occupation and all it represented, stressing its very real benevolent aspects, and remaining generally inarticulate on social issues, also assisted in playing down the prophetic function of the church. When a course in Christian social action was begun in the Union Theological Seminary three years ago it attracted only one regular student and two or three auditors. The social creed of the church has been unrevised since the early thirties. The social department of the Kyodan has in the main occupied

itself with coordinating necessary relief work and social service, leaving little time for considering the formulation of social policy.

The conference theme was Christian Social Responsibility, and the morning lectures and the afternoon discussion periods were devoted to this subject. The evenings were used by the versatile leader for a series of lectures on contemporary theologians. This proved to be of providential importance. These lectures established the theological credentials of the speaker. People who feared they would hear another version of the so-called American "social gospel" were intrigued the first night by such topics as "a revolution in theology," "scepticism as to human reason," and "the whole of life affected by sin." By the second evening, when a closely reasoned analysis of four types of the doctrine of revelation was given, the whole body of delegates was following the English and Japanese spoken word, and the accompanying blackboard notes, with an intentness that suggested surgeons witnessing a new and crucially important type of operation. Later, as the speaker analyzed the social implications of Barthian theology, and especially as he told the story of the rediscovery of the Christian social imperative by European resistance groups in the occupied countries, one had a feeling that for many, in the words of Visser 't Hooft, a forgotten dimension of Christian faith was opening up. Especially in his interpretation of Reinhold Niebuhr's theology, with its dialectical emphasis upon a faith utterly transcendent, yet utterly relevant to man's historical situation, Dr. Bennett assuredly "spoke to the condition" of us who heard him. As a single example, the statement, "Niebuhr has transcendent dimensions but does not allow them to obscure the intimations of the transcendent" opened up discussion of the whole subject of apologetics and pointed the way to balancing one-sided discontinuity with another equally important truth.

The morning lectures dealing with Christian social responsibility were introduced with the statement of a group of ecumenical leaders that the greatest obstacle to the advance of the church has been its indifference to social justice. To the satisfaction of his hearers, Bennett was careful to lay the theological foundations for Christian social action. As he built up arguments familiar to readers of *Christian Ethics and Social Policy*, *Christianity and Communism*, and others of his books, it became clear that he was giving direction but no pat formulae to the Japanese church. He depicted Communism as a unified world view which appeals to men who have nothing better, which can be defeated not by the kind of repressive measures which at the very time of his speaking were seemingly under way in Japan, but by a positive approach to the needs which Communism is attempting to meet. A description of the Federal Council's Department

on Church and Economic Life, to which Bennett himself has made a large contribution, suggested one pattern of positive approach. The final lecture dealt with Christianity and democracy. It was a challenge to humility in social judgments, realism as to human nature, and willingness to make positive choice between relative goods or evils in spite of risks.

Many of these concepts may be familiar to American Christians but they came as water to parched earth in this country. The response exceeded the greatest hopes of those who had a part in setting up the institute. President Kuwada of the Union Seminary, one of the outstanding theological leaders of the Presbyterian-Reformed group, declared frankly that there had been a wide gap between theology and social ethic which was now bridged by the Christology which Dr. Bennett stressed. He acknowledged his own share in the failure of the Japanese church to assume social responsibility and declared that a new beginning must be made. He also spoke in the highest terms of the "true Christian liberalism" which Bennett exemplified. Another brilliant theologian, known especially for his interpretations of Barth, praised the logic that linked eschatology to politics. In the latter discussion sessions, problems and difficulties of the Japanese church were frankly aired. A professor in a Christian school reminded his hearers that the church had in the main acquiesced in the military tyranny of Japan's pre-war and wartime leadership, and asked if the church would dare to take a stand should reactionary forces again come to power. A minister from a section remote from Tokyo pointed out that in his locality Christianity was so identified with America that it had little influence. The head of the social department of the Kyodan voiced his regret that this department had been pre-occupied with the necessary work of aiding the victims of social injustice to the exclusion of attacks upon evil institutions themselves, and pledged a new beginning. It was interesting to see pastors of large churches who at first had felt they must return to their churches by Sunday, but who became so interested that they wired to have other arrangements made at the last moment, and stayed to the end.

The last two discussion sessions were given over to the problem of carrying forward the work which Bennett had begun. It was decided to ask the Kyodan's general assembly in the fall to create a commission on social study and action which would help to bring Christianity into the realm of politics and economic life. This commission is to have twenty-five members, including ministers, laymen, and specialists in the fields of economics and industrial relations. It will make concrete recommendations for action by the entire church. Problems of labor, industry, and economic policy in this land which, in the shadow of the Communism of the Asiatic continent, is seeking to work its way for-

ward to economic justice, will be given priority. The Union Seminary, where sixty-five students are now studying "Christian Ethics and Social Policy," a required course, is expected to show the fruits of the institute in a more systematic relating of social responsibility to the evangelistic message of its graduates, and a sustained attempt to produce a ministry to the dispossessed. The substance of Bennett's addresses, as translated by his able interpreter, Dr. David Iino, will be published for sale at cost and circulated throughout the Kyodan. Each delegate has pledged himself to be responsible for the sale of one hundred copies. The delegates, moreover, have agreed to carry the insights of the institute to every subdivision of the Kyodan, and to present its findings at the summer conferences to be held throughout Japan. As a means of recording the convictions to which they had been led during the institute the members prepared a resolution from which the following is quoted:

"God is not only the God of the individual soul, but He is also the God of History and of the events

and happenings of the world. Today our witness, through the medium of social action, must achieve living reality. The Church must proclaim the Gospel while taking into consideration its heavy responsibility in the realms of politics and economics. . . . The Church . . . should struggle to the last for social justice. . . . It must seek the content of true democracy for the structure of Japanese society."

To us who were present the conference was an achievement in ecumenical sharing. We were one body, facing common problems, and the vision of the whole church, its contrition for social wrong, its vast resources for imparting direction and goal and for saving men from false messiahs in an age of desperation, all seemed near and available to us. Since the close of the institute Japan has been confronted with new and still more tragic problems, but it is fair to say that in the very act of confronting them it is now better prepared to meet them with a rounded and strengthened witness and a sense of increased solidarity with the whole Body of Christ.

The World Church: News and Notes

Baptist Students Work on Berlin Projects

Ten college students from the United States are among a group of sixty young Baptists from six nations currently working on several reconstruction projects in West Berlin.

The projects, which have been in progress since the end of July, were planned by the World Baptist Youth Conference in cooperation with the Berlin Student Friendship Work Camp.

Student-workers have been clearing rubble at the site of two Baptist churches, one in Steglitz and another in Lichterfelde in the American sector, and have been cleaning and repairing the former Siemens' Castle in Wannsee which was turned over to the Berlin Free churches by the city government.

Among the students are four from the United Kingdom, six from Sweden, two from Norway and one from Denmark. All are travelling at their own expense and are living individually with German families in Berlin.

After the completion of the projects this summer, a conference will be held by the foreign and German students. Several students from Switzerland are also scheduled to attend.

The major Berlin project, rehabilitation of the Siemens' Castle, will make possible the establishment of an international poliomyelitis research and treatment center with 135 beds. The U. S. High Commission for Germany recently contributed \$35,000 toward its construction.—*Religious News Service*.

1952 World Youth Meeting Scheduled for India

A conference of youth delegates from all parts of the world has been scheduled to meet in India in December,

1952. Approximately 300 young people are expected to attend, about two-thirds of them from various parts of Asia and one-third from Western nations.

The plan for the conference was adopted by the World Christian Youth Commission, holding its annual meeting July 17-23, at Ontario Ladies' College in Whitby, Ontario, Canada. Comprising the commission are the World Student Christian Federation, the World YWCA, the World's Alliance of YMCA's, the World Council of Christian Education and the World Council of Churches' Youth Department.

The announcement of the Asian conference was made in a "Call" issued by the Commission at Whitby to Christian youth of the entire world, urging them to concern themselves with evangelization and to support young Christians in Asia, which it said is "a center of spiritual struggle and opportunity for Christian youth." —*Ecumenical Press Service*, New York.

German Churches and Trade Unions Seek Mutual Understanding

"The misconception regarding one another which is still prevalent on both sides" is the "most serious obstacle to closer cooperation between the church and the trade unions in Germany," according to a statement issued by leading representatives of the Protestant and Catholic churches and of the Trade Union movement.

The statement which came at the conclusion of a six-month study group which met in Frankfurt, said that both groups "have no more ardent desire than to bring about a real and lasting improvement in the external living conditions of all workers and the recognition of their full status of human beings.

" . . . We recognize and confess that, by failure on the part of members of the Churches and of the Trade

Christianity and Crisis

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Unions, Christian and non-Christian alike, in past and present, grave mistakes have been made which have borne heavily on the working class. . . .

"The most serious obstacle to closer cooperation is no longer so much the question of ideological neutrality in the Trade Unions, nor yet the recognition by the Church of the social coming-of-age of the worker, with all that that entails, but the misconception regarding one another which is still prevalent on both sides, and which comes from an epoch that should be put behind us once and for all.

"We believe that it is both valuable and salutary for Trade Unionists—no matter whether they are members of the Christian Churches or not—and representatives

of the Churches, clerical and lay, to whom the removal of all the hardships under which the workers suffer is a real and vital concern, to meet together for discussion in a spirit of mutual confidence. . . .

"We members of the two Churches, clerical and lay, believe that the values of 'freedom, justice and human dignity' which are anchored in the basic law of Trade Unions constitute an ideological foundation of sufficient breadth and stability to allow of the fulfilling of all the duties that go with Trade Union work in according with principles of social ethics which are recognized by the Christian churches likewise. We are of the conviction that active cooperation by the Christian workers of the Trade Union movement involves them in no moral or religious peril, but that, on the contrary, it is when they themselves shoulder their duties and responsibilities in the Trade Unions that they will be truly fulfilling the social mission laid upon them by God.

"We members of the Trade Unions have no protest to make against the education and training of Christian workers within the confessional patterns of work. We have no fear that the unity of the Trade Unions would be destroyed, or even endangered, but expect rather that these workers, acting from a sense of their responsibility as Christians, will come as a welcome reinforcement for our work. We will give them all scope for responsible cooperation."—*Ecumenical Press Service*, Geneva.

Communication

Dear Sir:

Dean Weigle's article on "Freedom of Religion and Education" in the July 24 issue is the best summary of the whole question that I have seen. However, from the viewpoint of a citizen in the South there is an important question that is not faced. How are our qualified high school graduates going to get any further education?

All of us know that only a part of those who are qualified can consider going to college. And many who go are certainly not qualified. Every year I try in vain to help the high school graduates of working people get a chance at a college education. A few of them are lucky, but most of them have to give it up.

Most of us deplore the idea of no religion in the public schools. We also rebel at the idea of federal control of our schools. But how are these youngsters going to get training? Is no higher education (except for the middle and upper groups) better than government controlled education in state universities?

I don't have an answer to my question, but I haven't even seen the question asked in a fair way in the mass of recent writing on the subject.

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